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ABSTRACT

The short manual designed for teachers of the handicapped focuses on management of individual behavior in the classroom and briefly explains principles of behavior change. Five basic steps in management are explained to be specification of problem behavior, counting the occurrence of the problem behavior, changing the problem behavior by formulating a plan, re-planning if necessary, and maintaining the appropriate behavior. Provision of appropriate consequences, reward or punishment, is then discussed. Reward and punishment are defined, and clarifying guidelines and comments are made concerning them. Common problems of implementation are then anticipated, followed by suggested solutions. A typical situation of classroom misbehavior is described in short, dramatic form to demonstrate the behavior principles. Mention is then made of a video tape presentation that illustrates the basic steps of the management process as the teacher would use them. A copy of the video tape is said to be available through the Iowa Regional Educational Media Centers. (CB)

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Management of Individual Behavior in the Classroom

A Guide for Teachers of the Handicapped

October 1972

by
PATRICK MCGREEVY, *M.A.*
RICHARD GREGORY, *M.A.*
assisted by
ROBERT SMITH

COORDINATION STAFF
Frank Vance, *Project Director*
Jerry A. Caster, *Consultant*
Jeffrey P. Grimes, *Consultant*
Peter A. Malmberg, *Consultant*

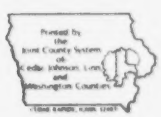
PRODUCTION STAFF
S. Bernie Walden, *Production Coordinator*
Esther Feske, *Graphic Artist*
Dorothy Phillips, *Assistant Editor*

A COOPERATIVE PROGRAM INVOLVING THE IOWA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION AND THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

This manual is dedicated to all teachers who learn and all children who teach.

The Authors:

Patrick McGreevy	M.A., The University of Iowa, 1968 four years teaching EMR and TMR children
Richard Gregory	M.A., University of Indiana, 1964 six years as school social worker
Robert Smith	psychology student, Black Hawk College, Moline, Illinois



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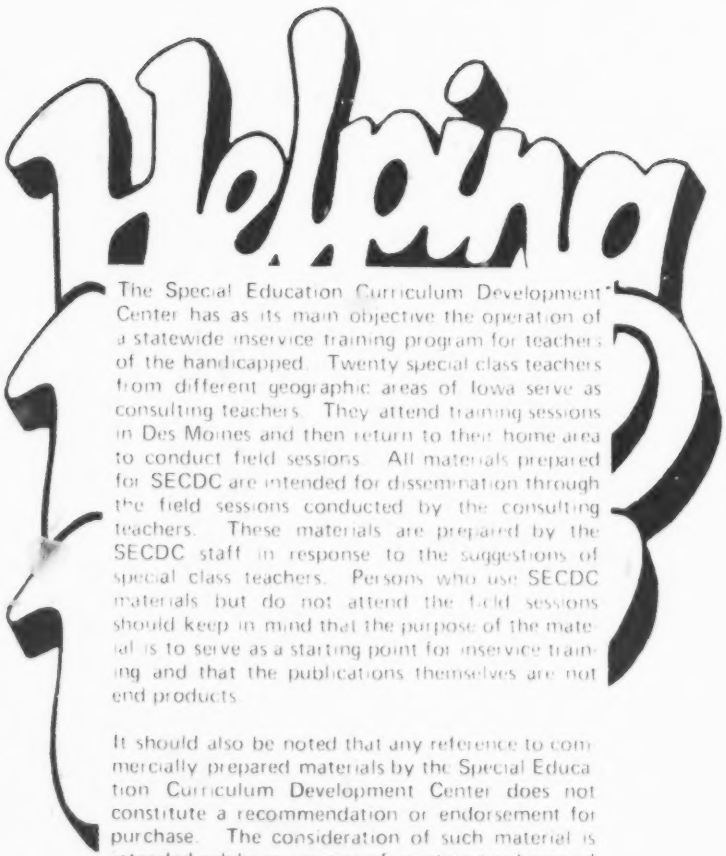

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Preface

Once upon a time
there was a boy born Willie. . .
a pretty child who laughed, smiled,
grinned, and grew.

One fine day Willie went off to school and
was happy because it would be fun . . .
mom told him so.
All through kindergarten, then into first,
next came second, but Willie was slow.
You'll have to stay here for another year,
said his teacher to him . . . *to learn your*
letters, numbers, colors, and cutting.

One day, in the second year of second grade,
came a man in a suit.
And Willie answered questions about pictures
and things, and played with some blocks
as the man gazed at his watch.
When he got home there was another man
talking in low tones to his folks.

When to school Willie returned next day,
Teacher met him, smiled, in an unusual way,
I'm sorry, my boy, but you can't learn in here.
There's a school that will help you, I trust,
away across town after a ride on a bus.

And so Willie rode this bus
to his new school.
And he was alone
and scared
and sad,
Come in, said his new teacher,
We're happy you're here.
We have fun while we learn, for here we all care.

But fun as it was to read and to write,
Willie didn't learn numbers, nor letters--
not quite.
His mates didn't like him, with him
wouldn't share.
Little Willie didn't learn, didn't score,
didn't care.

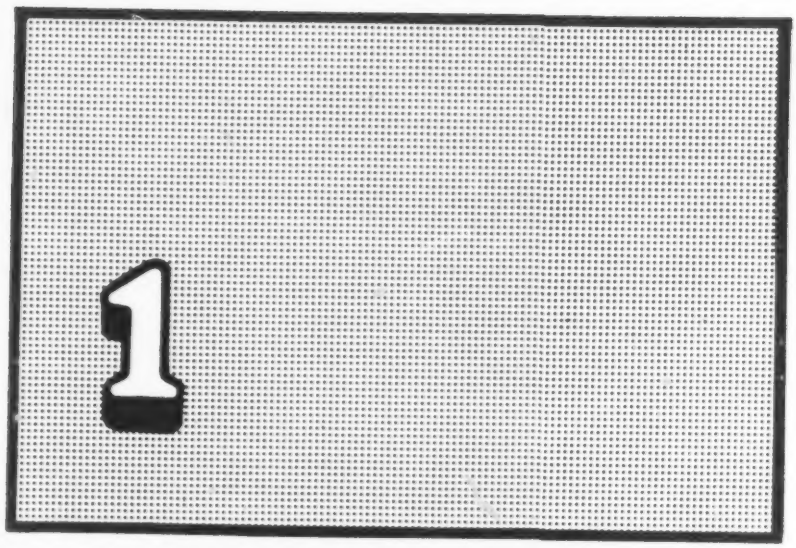
So back came the man in the suit.
Glad you're here, the teacher said,
I just can't do anything with him.

According to a recent survey of Iowa special education teachers (conducted by the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction), their most pressing problem is classroom management. In other words, they want to help children learn who seemingly don't want to.

This manual focuses on those children who exhibit behaviors incompatible with their learning in the classroom. As such, we are dealing with the elimination of *negative* behaviors and their replacement with *positive* counterparts--behaviors compatible with classroom learning.

Increasing the frequency of positive behaviors already evident, as well as the shaping of *new* behaviors will not be treated in this manual.

P.M.
R.G.



Basic Steps in Management

If you have a Willie (and most of us do), your chances of success in helping him will be greatly increased by following a systematic approach. In other words, to change Willie's behavior you need to follow a specific series of steps.

We have experienced success using the following steps, and **YOU CAN TOO:**

1. SPECIFY
2. COUNT
3. CHANGE
4. RE-PLAN (if necessary)
5. MAINTAIN

Step 1:

SPECIFY the problem behavior

- during or immediately after the occurrence of a behavior that concerns you, ask the child, in a non-threatening manner, what he was doing
- accept whatever the child says as having some value; avoid being judgmental
- determine with the child what observable behavior he is exhibiting; be precise about the behavior; work with only one behavior at a time
- determine under what conditions the behavior occurs, i.e., place, time, materials and relevant people
- ask yourself how you respond to the behavior most of the time
- discuss further the behavior with the child; determine with the class if the behavior is helping him, that is, make a value judgment concerning the behavior

Step 2:

COUNT how often the behavior occurs
per hour, per class period or
per school day; record your
count on a graph or chart

- two sample charts are enclosed in Part 5
  the first chart is blank

  the second one is filled out and
  explained in an accompanying video tape

- count and record for at least one week;
  children can help you count and record,
  as shown in the video tape

Exercise: Follow Steps 1 and 2 (*specify and count)*
with a student in your class; make accurate
notes.

Remember

YOU CAN TOO

Step 3:

CHANGE the problem behavior by formulating a plan

- determine with the child an appropriate behavior to substitute for the inappropriate one; make sure the substitute behavior is incompatible with the problem behavior, i.e., both behaviors cannot be exhibited at the same or approximately the same time
- determine with the child if the environmental conditions need changing
- plan with the child what the consequences of exhibiting the appropriate behavior will be; also, determine if there will be planned consequences for exhibiting the inappropriate behavior
- record the entire plan in a contract, to be signed by both the child and the teacher (see two examples of contracts in Part 5- the first contract is blank, the second one is filled out); both the child and the teacher should keep a copy, to avoid excuses later
- record for two weeks the occurrence of both behaviors on the performance chart to determine if there is progress (i.e., the occurrence of the appropriate behavior increases and the inappropriate behavior decreases)

Step 4:

RE-PLAN

if necessary

- if you are not satisfied with the child's behavior and/or your own behavior, formulate a new plan of action
- this new plan might include any one or all of the following
  1) specify both behaviors again, being more precise
  2) further change in environmental conditions
  3) change in planned consequences
- amend the first contract or write a new one
- continue to record the occurrence of both behaviors

Step 5:

MAINTAIN the appropriate behavior

- gradually eliminate the planned consequences; the appropriate behavior should continue to occur as a function of unplanned, *natural* consequences (i.e., knowledge of results and/or teacher approval)
- continue to record as long as you feel it is necessary or beneficial

Remember . . . .

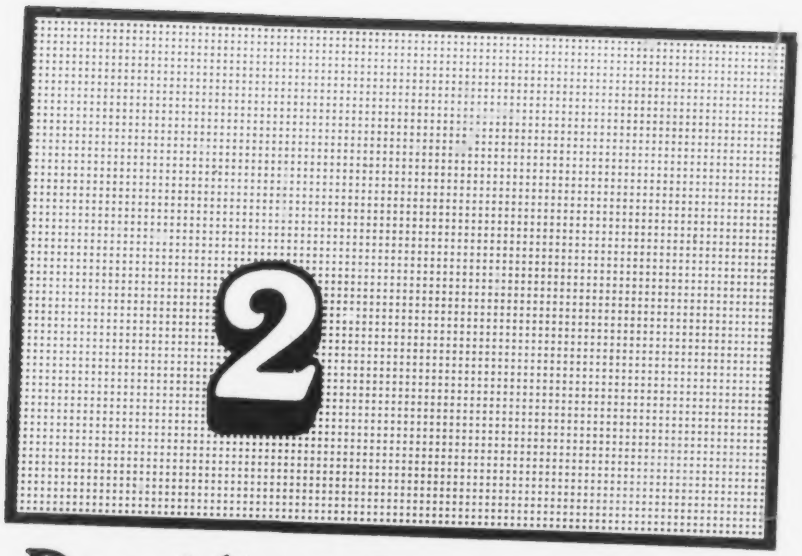
SPECIFY

COUNT

CHANGE

RE PLAN
(if necessary)

MAINTAIN



Providing Appropriate Consequences

Most teachers are primarily concerned with disciplining Willie and his classmates, in other words, providing appropriate consequences to change their behavior. To simplify even further, we are talking about

REWARD

and

PUNISHMENT

This section will deal with the appropriate and effective use of reward and punishment.

Reward presenting a pleasant consequence following the occurrence of an appropriate behavior -- increases the probability that the behavior will occur again

Punishment I: presenting an unpleasant consequence following an inappropriate behavior -- decreases the probability that the behavior will occur again; punishment does work, but the following side effects may result

- children often avoid those who punish them (when we want them to approach us for learning)
- children often lie and cheat to avoid punishment
- children often feel bitterness and resentment for the teacher and *the system*
- children who are punished often begin to feel that they are *failures*
- punishment's effects are often temporary

Punishment II withholding a pleasant consequence following an inappropriate behavior -- decreases the probability that the behavior will occur again

In using reward and punishment to change behavior we have now arrived at two basic strategies:

1. present an unpleasant consequence following the negative (inappropriate) behavior and a pleasant consequence following the positive (appropriate) behavior incompatible with it

   REWARD and PUNISHMENT I

2. withhold a pleasant consequence following the negative behavior and present the pleasant consequence only when the positive behavior occurs

   REWARD and PUNISHMENT II

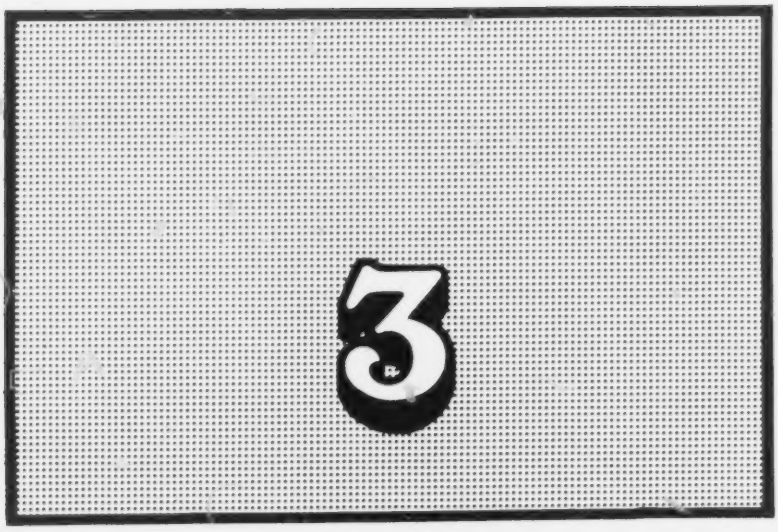
Strategy number 2 is far more effective!

Try it and you'll see!

Exercise:

List behaviors below that you would like to change in your students; then list rewards that you could use for each behavior. Check the ones that were successful.

Behavior	Consequence (reward)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Problems of Implementation

Now that we have completed the basic steps of classroom management, we will try to anticipate some questions you might have:

Problem 1: I ask the child what he is doing and can't get him to tell me what it is.

Solution 1: If he does not respond, you might say, *It appeared to me that you were doing something. What was it?* Remember, your student may be used to being punished, so when you ask him what he is doing he may at first be apprehensive. You might smile and say gently, *I just want you to tell me; you won't be punished. If you tell me what you were doing, I'll be happy.*

Problem 2: I have a student who has so many problems that I don't know where to begin.

Solution 2: Begin with the problem that concerns you most and, together with the student, specify it. It is impossible to work with the *whole student*. You must work with one behavior at a time.

Problem 3: John will always tell me what he is doing, but when I ask him if it's helping him he shrugs and says he doesn't know. What do I do then?

Solution 3: Keep talking with him. Accept whatever he says, no matter what it is. It's not that whatever he says is acceptable, but that whatever he says is worth listening to. If he says that a particular behavior helps him, show him the possible consequences of that behavior, stressing that he is responsible for his behavior and its consequences. Accept what he says as his values and avoid judging them in relation to your own values. Avoid saying to him, *You know better than that!*

Problem 4: Mary will always tell me what she is doing and says that her behavior isn't helping her, but she doesn't seem able to plan a change.

Solution 4: Help Mary to think of possible alternative behaviors as well as their possible consequences. Then agree on one behavior and together set a specific step-by-step plan of action.

Problem 5: What should I do if the student forgets the plan?

Solution 5: Write down the place in the form of a contract signed by you and the student. Give a copy to the student and keep one for yourself. Then there are no excuses!

Problem 6: What should I do if the student does not follow the plan?

Solution 6: Do not accept excuses. Ask the student if and when he intends to follow the plan If his response is not precise, then ask him if we need to change the plan. If the rewards within the plan are adequate, you will not need a verbal commitment to follow the plan.

Problem 7: What should I do if I can't *get through* to a child after some effort?

Solution 7: Find someone else -- a student or another professional whom the child will more readily accept. No one can be *all things to all people or for that matter, any things to some people.*

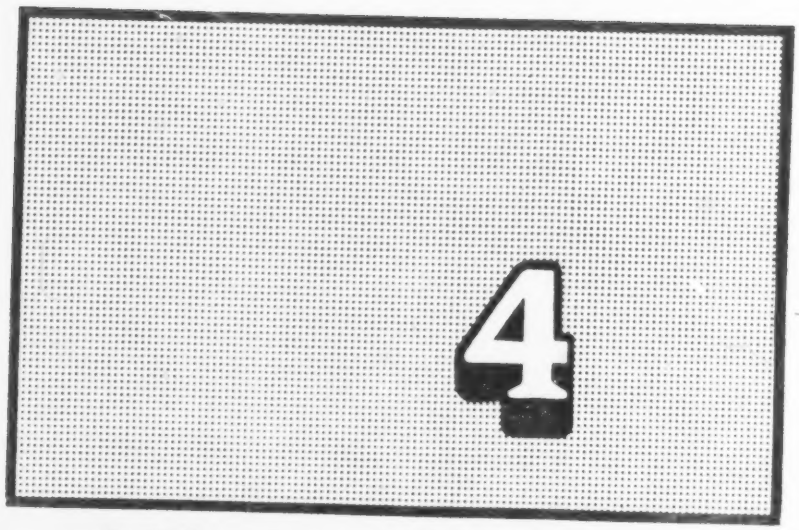
Problem 8: These management steps sound fine, but I don't have the time to do what you suggest.

Solution 8: Ask yourself this, *How much time do I spend disciplining and controlling the child now?* You will be amazed at the

amount of time it takes to critize a student's behavior. We suggest only a few seconds a day to reward more appropriate behavior. Do you have a few seconds for each one of your students?

Problem 9: How long should I use these steps with a particular behavior of a student?

Solution 9: These steps should be followed until the child is successful in learning the appropriate behavior. This behavior should be maintained by unplanned *natural consequences.* The child is then completely responsible for that behavior.



A Typical Situation

Stanford Bennett -- school psychologist
Phillip Mycupp -- school social worker
Miss Yvonne Yurturn -- teacher
Willie Wantoo -- student

When Mr. Bennett and Mr. Mycupp arrived, Miss Yurturn was happy to see them. She was at her wits end. Willie was misbehaving all over the place.

Mr. Mycupp suggested that they discuss the situation over coffee in the teachers' lounge. Miss Yurturn proceeded to tell her visitors all about Willie.

Miss Yurturn: Ever since the day he came he has been unhappy. He does not do his work and he does not get along with the rest of the children. Maybe you should test him again, Mr. Bennett. Maybe we should have another parent conference, Mr. Mycupp.

Mr. Bennett suggested to Miss Yurturn that the best approach would be to make a list of Willie's problem behaviors. After about 30 minutes discussion the following list emerged:

A. "I won't do it."
B. "I can't do it."
C. "That's no fun."
D. Does not pay attention.
E. Lazy work
F. Talking out
G. Teasing
H. Fighting

Mr. Mycupp asked Miss Yurturn which behavior gave her the most problems.

Miss Yurturn: I always have to remind him to pay attention.

Mr. Bennett suggested that they begin working on that behavior.

the next day

The next day Miss Yurturn, Mr. Bennett, and Willie sat down together to discuss the problem.

Miss Yurturn: Willie, many times during the school day I stop teaching and talk to you. Do you remember what I generally say?

Willie: Yes I do, you always tell me to pay attention.

Miss Yurturn: What do you do when you are not paying attention? How do you feel when I remind you to pay attention?

Willie: I don't know.

Miss Yurturn: Does not paying attention help you?

Willie: I don't know.

Miss Yurturn: Does thinking about other things help you?

Willie: Kinda.

Miss Yurturn: How do they help you?

Willie: Well, they're fun to think about.

Mr. Bennett: Is your school work fun?

Willie: I don't know.

Mr. Bennett: Willie, school should be a place where children have fun learning. It seems to me that you are not having fun, you're not learning.

Willie: Oh, I have fun.

Miss Yurturn: But Willie, I guess you don't have fun learning.

(No response from Willie.)

Mr. Bennett: Do you think, Willie, if the things you learn in school were more fun, you would pay attention?

Willie: Oh, I don't know.

Miss Yurturn: What if we could make school work fun, Willie.

(Willie smiles.)

Miss Yurturn: If we made your school work really fun, do you think you would work at it?

Willie smiles and says Yea!

Mr. Bennett: Well, Willie, let's you and Miss Yurturn and I set up a plan. Ya know, it's been kinda like getting out a map and trying to find the right highway.

Miss Yurturn: Willie, if I let you have two free think periods during the day, would you like that?

Willie smiles and says, Yea!

Miss Yurturn: O. K. , you can have two 15-minute periods, one at 11:00 and one at 2:00.

Willie: Wow!

Miss Yurturn: I'm not just giving you the free time; you will have to earn it. I will be watching to see when you are working and when you are not paying attention. Every time I see you working I will remind you of your next free period. Every time I notice that you are not paying attention, Willie, I will say *two minutes*, which means that two minutes will be taken off your next time period. You may work or do anything you want during your free time period.

Mr. Bennett: How does that sound to you Willie?

Willie: Great!

Mr. Bennett: Willie, I've got an idea. Let's you and Miss Yurturn and I sign a contract. You know what a contract is, don't you?

Willie: Kinda.

Miss Yurturn: Well Willie, it's when two people go into business together.

Willie: Oh, I know now.

Mr. Bennett: The contract will remind us what we decided to do today. We will each sign it and have our own copy.

Miss Yurturn: How does that sound, Willie?

Willie smiles and says, O.K.

Miss Yurturn: We will also keep a chart, Willie, so that when Mr. Bennett comes we will show him how you are doing. The chart will show us how many minutes of free time you earned each day and how many times I noticed you were working.

Willie: Can I keep the chart on my desk?

Miss Yurturn: Sure, Willie.

Mr. Bennett: Willie, it sounds like you are really going to have fun. Now remember, when we write the contract, a deal is a deal.

Willie shakes his hand and says, Yes sir.

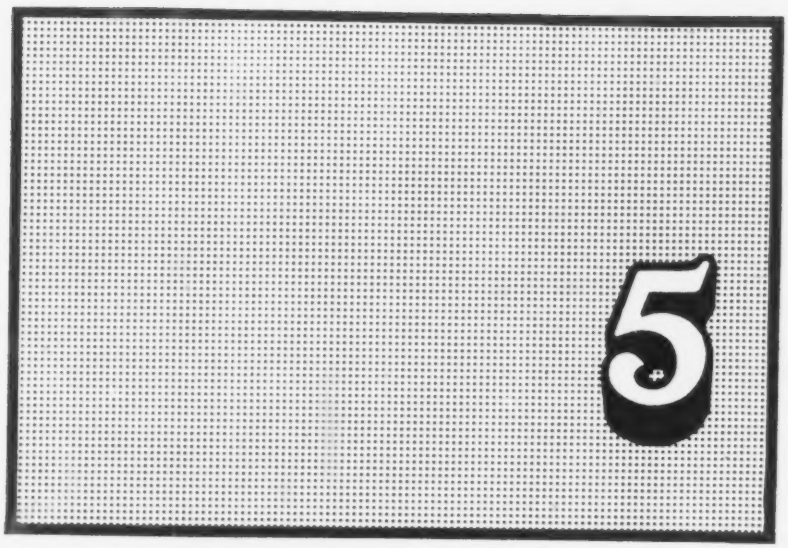
Mr. Bennett: I'll be back after lunch and we'll sign the contract.

Mr. Bennett returned after lunch. Willie was still excited about the deal. He had told his friends all about his new free time. While Mr. Bennett was explaining the contract and chart to Willie, Miss Yurturn was in the classroom explaining to the rest of the children about Willie's free time. They agreed with her that Willie did not pay attention and that maybe this free time would help him solve his problem. They also agreed with her that once Willie's problem was solved, their work would not be interrupted. The children agreed that they would be happy about that. So Willie returned to the classroom with his copy of the contract and his chart. He showed these to the rest of the children and received much approval from them. Miss Yurturn reminded Willie that Mr. Bennett would be back in a week to visit with him and look at his chart.

In the weeks to come Willie was more attentive and Miss Yurturn was more positive in that she was learning to remind not only Willie but also the rest of her children

of their good behavior. Miss Yurturn discovered that since Willie was more attentive most of his other problems were minimized, which was a great relief to her. She now had many good reasons to be positive. She was succeeding and, more importantly, Willie was succeeding. She found she could do something with him. She also found he could do something for her.

We've really helped Willie Wantoo.



Synopsis of Video Tape Presentation

A video tape presentation has been prepared to assist the reader in applying the behavior management process in the classroom. The presentation illustrates the basic steps of the management process as the teacher would use them.

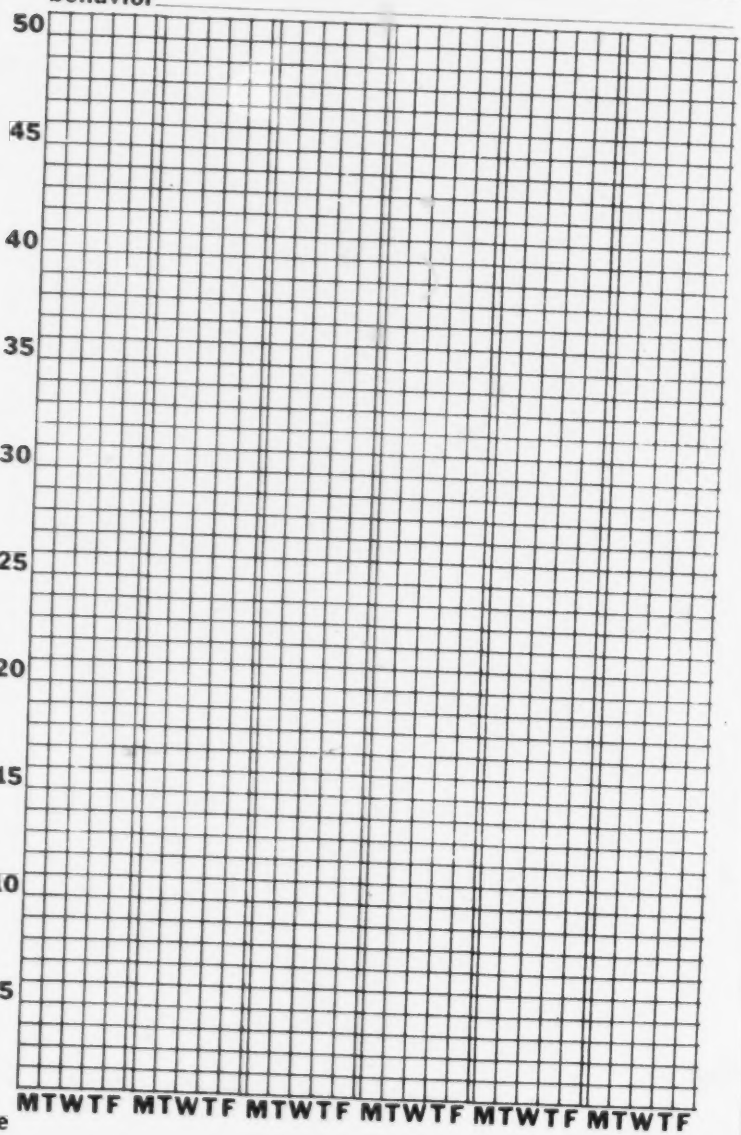
The student and behavior problem in the video tape are the same as those described in the sample performance chart and contract in this section. The complete process is developed as it is used in the classroom.

A copy of the video tape may be secured through the Iowa Regional Educational Media Center in your area.

••Performance Chart••

name _____ dates: _____ to _____

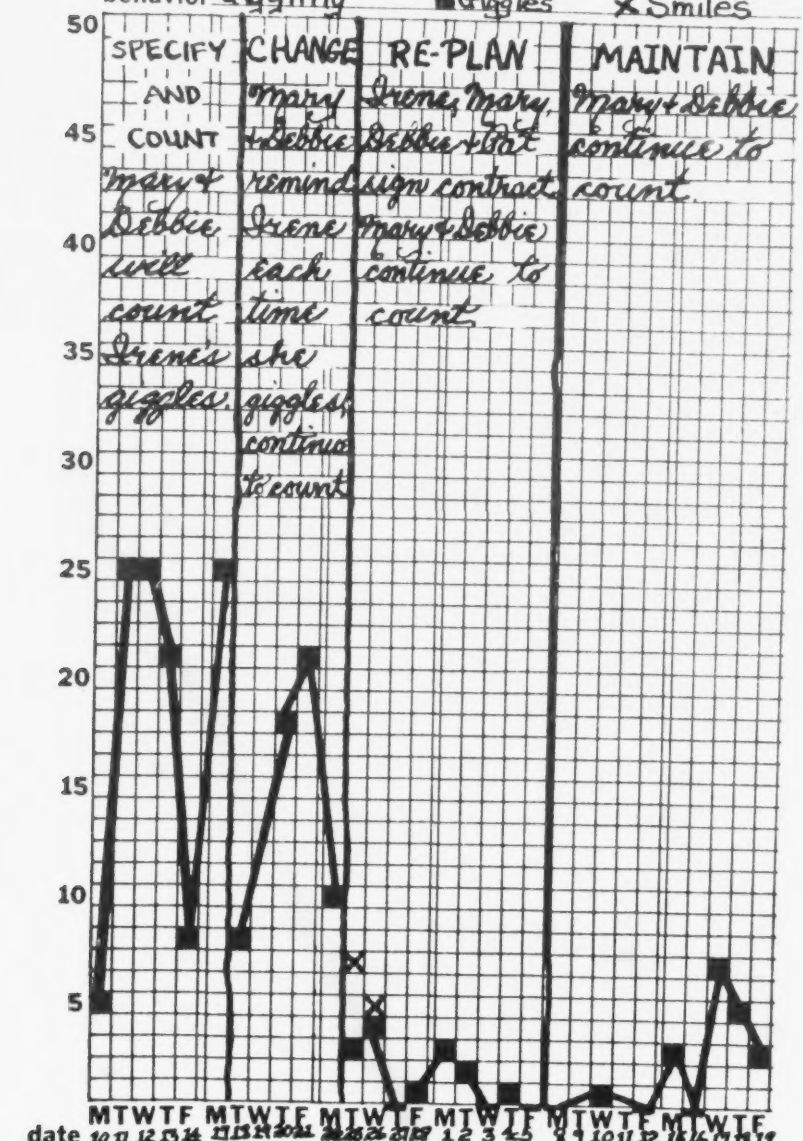
behavior _____



••Performance Chart••

name Irene dates: 4-10 to →

behavior Giggling ■Giggles ×Smiles


50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
SPECIFY AND COUNT
Mary + Debbie will count Irene's giggles.
CHANGE
Mary + Debbie remind Irene each time she giggles, continue to count
RE-PLAN
Irene, Mary, Debbie + Pat sign contract. Mary + Debbie continue to count
MAINTAIN
Mary + Debbie continue to count.
M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F M T W T F
date 10 11 12 13 14 17 18 19 20 21 24 25 26 27 28 1 2 3 4 5 8 9 10 11 12 15 16 17 18 19
month April
May

CONTRACT

This is a contract between _____, student,

and _____, teacher.

Date: from _____ to _____

The following are the terms of the contract:

I, _____ (student) will _____

_____

_____

I, _____ (teacher) will _____

_____

_____

student

teacher

If the student fulfills his part of the contract, benefits will result. However, if the student fails to fulfill his part of the contract, benefits will be withheld.

This contract may be terminated by the consent of both student and teacher. New contracts may be entered into by the same consent.

Notes: _____

CONTRACT

This is a contract between Irene, student,
and Pat McGreevy, teacher.
Date: from 4-25-72 to _____

The following are the terms of the contract:

I, Irene (student) will smile during class sessions and try not to giggle.

I, Pat McGreevy (teacher) will (assisted by Debbie and Mary) count the number of smiles and giggles, reminding Irene of the occurrence of both. Debbie will count giggles & Mary smiles.

Irene
student

Pat McGreevy
teacher

If the student fulfills his part of the contract, benefits will result. However, if the student fails to fulfill his part of the contract, benefits will be withheld.

This contract may be terminated by the consent of both student and teacher. New contracts may be entered into by the same consent.

Notes: Irene will be reminded of smiles and encouraged to do so (4-25). Mary and Debbie found it hard to count smiles and instead simply encouraged Irene to do so (5-1)